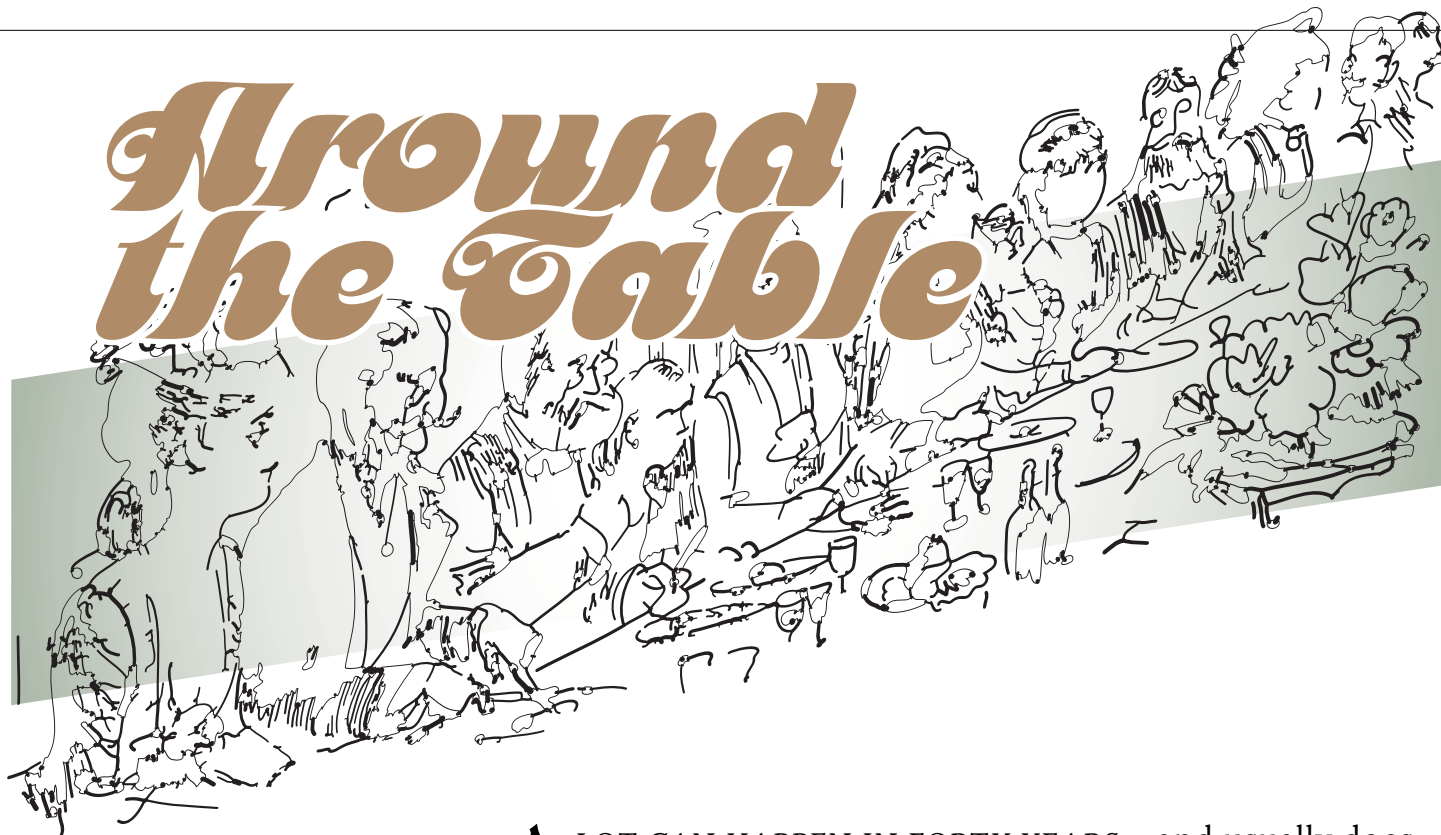


Around the Table



A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN FORTY YEARS—and usually does. What was once small can become larger. What was once thin can become fatter. What was once plain can become more beautiful, or interesting. And what was once young definitely *is* older.

The talk around here the last few weeks has been about my fortieth high school reunion. The class reunion—be it high school, college, or grade school—is a remarkable phenomenon. Individuals, who once upon a time had perhaps only one thing in common, periodically gather from the four points of the compass to sit around a banquet table to reminisce about the good old days and regale each other with their more recent (and more complimentary) exploits.

For reasons deemed socially circumspect, this writer more often than not has forgone the suspect pleasures of the class reunion—including this most recent iteration. Via the immediacy of today's digital wonders, one

can reap many of the nostalgic benefits of the gathering without actually attending.

One of the more common phrases uttered at reunion gatherings is "Remember when...", as in "*Remember when we took the state championship in basketball?*" or "*Remember when I got caught smoking in the bathroom?*" or "*Remember when I had a crush on (insert name of star quarterback)?*"

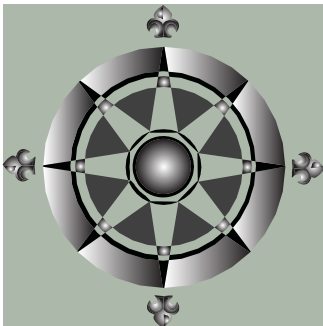
Believers celebrate a reunion of sorts every time they observe the ordinance of Communion, for the Lord Jesus commanded that we do it to remember His sacrifice on our behalf.

Reflections
by the Pond

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re-un-ion (re yoon yun)
 n. [Fr. *réunion* < ML.
reunion] 1. the act
 of reuniting 2. a
 gathering of persons
 after separation.



For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Jesus wanted us to remember—not just that He *was*, that He was real, but what He did on our behalf.

Every time we receive communion we are to do it as if we were all seated around a table, encouraging each other with our recollections: "*Remember when Jesus took the penalty of my sins upon Himself?*" and "*Remember when He loved me enough to die for me?*" and "*Remember how much He suffered for all of us?*".

Personally, in the solemnity of the moment as we hold in our hand and contemplate the cup and the bread, our thoughts are to be, "*Lord Jesus, I remember...*"

As important and meaningful as is the observance of the Lord's Supper, for everyone in His family there will come a day so grand, so expansive, so overwhelming as to overshadow this periodic remembrance.

Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 8:10-11

It is popular imagery in the Bible, this idea of believers gathering around the heavenly banquet table, reuniting with old friends, with relatives—as we *all* are in the blood of Christ—with Jesus Himself as the host or guest of honor, or even as the waiter. Jesus uses this imagery when He invites His straying children to return to Him in His letter to the church in Laodicea.

"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

Revelation 3:19-21

After the heady experience of worshiping around the throne of heaven, what could be better than sitting down to supper with the Lord Jesus and all the saints that have gone before? Imagine the conversation! Imagine the wealth of memories from those who laid the groundwork for the church, or those who struggled for righteousness under the law. Imagine the exquisite joy of reclining at table with the Lord!

All good things here on earth are only pale reflections of what the believer will know in eternity.

The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.

And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.

He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces,

And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken.

And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

Isaiah 25:6-9

There is no fellowship—even between brothers and sisters in Christ—that can compare with what is in store for those who call upon His name.

